What is claimed is:

1. A melt-processible composition for molding closures for beverage containers comprising:

(a) a thermoplastic base polymeric material;

(b) a quantity of layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay having platelets with a diameter of approximately 1 micron.

2. The composition of claim 1 wherein said thermoplastic base polymeric material comprises a polyolefin.

3. The composition of claim 2 wherein said polyolefin is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polyethylene and a copolymer comprising propylene and ethylene monomeric units.

4. The composition of claim 1 wherein said layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay is montmorillonite clay.

5. A beverage container closure molded from the composition of claim 1.

6. A melt-processible composition for molding sealant layers for beverage containers comprising:

(a) a thermoplastic base polymeric material;

(b) a quantity of layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay having platelets with a diameter of approximately 1 micron.

7. The composition of claim 7 wherein said

thermoplastic base polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of ethyene vinyl acetate copolymer, polyethylene, styrene ethylene butadiene styrene polymer, styrene butadiene styrene polymer, ethylene propylene diene monomer, and metallocene polymers.

8. The composition of claim 6 wherein said layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay is montmorillonite clay.

9. A beverage container sealant layer molded from the composition of claim 6.

10. A method of decreasing the gas permeability of a thermoplastic material, said method comprising introducing a quantity of layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay to said material.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein said thermoplastic material is a polyolefin.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein said polyolefin is selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polyethylene and a copolymer comprising propylene and ethylene monomeric units.

13. The method of claim 10 wherein said layered magnesium aluminum silicate clay is montmorillonite clay.